



Friends of Morwell National Park Inc.

PO Box 19
CHURCHILL 3842

Ranger: (051) 221478
Secretary: (051) 221943

Dear Friends

AUGUST 1994 NEWSLETTER

Last Activity Day - Tree Planting -

About a dozen people managed to get to the July tree-planting day, and 344 trees were put in -

Swamp gum	E. ovata	190
Messmate	E. oblique	48
Silver Wattle	A. dealbata	56
Blackwood	A. melanoxylon	50

The group was quite small as some people could not stay the whole time, and are to be congratulated on planting this number of trees.

From the Ranger

Rob has been approached by a teacher from Traralgon Secondary College, who wants to bring a group of students during the week to do a planting, and this is being arranged. It is fortunate, as the number of trees to be planted this year was not going to be reached without an extra day. The fate of the 3 wheeled motorbike has come to light -no doubt Rob will report on this at the AGM.

Spiders Wanted

"I have obtained a Research Permit from the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources to conduct a survey of spiders in Morwell National Park. The Permit is for 12 months commencing 1 July 1994 and allows me to collect spiders from anywhere and at any time within Morwell National Park. I am a member of the Australasian Arachnological Society and will be assisted in spider identification by the South Australian Museum and the Museum of Victoria. Any Friends of the Morwell National Park who are fortunate enough to find spiders in the Park, please bring their presence to my attention" -Rob de Souza-Daw

Monash Open Day Display

The Friends had a display booth this year at Monash University Open Day. There was a fairly constant stream of people interested in either the Park or the Friends Group, and we felt it was well worthwhile running the stand.

August Activity Day

The last of the winter tree-planting days is on Sunday 21st August, 10.00 a.m. start as usual though if you want to come later, please do. Meet at end of Braniffs Road.

Annual General Meeting

The Annual General Meeting was held on 7 August at the Depot, and the following office bearers were elected:

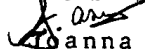
President :	Ken Harris
Vice President:	Wendy Steenbergen
Secretary :	Wendy Nickson



Ass. Sec. (Newsletter):	Joanna Aziz
Treasurer:	Judy Lambert
Committee Member:	John Pulis

A copy of the President's report is enclosed.

Members are reminded that annual subscription fees are due. Please forward the slip below as soon as possible.


Joanna Aziz

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To: Treasurer, FMNP, PO Box 19, CHURCHILL 3842

Please find enclosed an amount of \$..... (\$10 Single, \$15 Family) being for membership fee.

NAME: TEL:

ADDRESS:

SignedDate / / 1993

Friends of Morwell National ParkError! Bookmark not defined.

President's Report 1993-4

We have come to the end of another successful year in the history of the Friends of Morwell National Park and in the development of the Park itself. Thank you to everyone who has contributed to our achievements during 1993-1994.

Tree-planting remains one of our most important and successful activities. Our 1993 season was duly completed last August and was well and truly celebrated with our traditional get together . This time we were once again the guests of Joanna and Hassan Aziz and we thank them for an excellent evening.

For 1994 plantings, our seedlings were once more grown by the Won Wron prison farm, but this should be for the last time. In addition we have to thank Anton Wray who had considerable success with growing seedlings of some species we have not grown previously. Unfortunately a batch of hemp bush, grown at Yallourn Secondary College were all lost when their watering computer was vandalised. They are nevertheless thanked for their efforts on our behalf, which had been organised by Shelley Templeman. In future we plan to grow all our own plants for revegetation of the Park.

We have completed three successful planting days so far this season. Attendance for the first day were disappointing, but we were compensated the second time. A good crowd had finished the planned planting a little early, when a group of Brownies turned up to help. Rob hurriedly went off to collect more seedlings and an extra 100 trees were planted. We are well up to schedule, with one more planting to be completed this month and a fill in planting Rob is organising with Traralgon Secondary College.

This year we reduced our koala surveys to one on 19th September, but it was well publicised and several extra helpers turned up. A total of 7 koalas were sighted, one of which had a baby with it.

The annual butterfly orchid survey recorded an excellent flowering year for the orchids, but once more there was no sign of new plants on any of the four plots.

We had planned as usual to visit another Friends group in October, but our planned visit to the Sale Wetlands was cancelled because of the extreme flooding . In November however several members visited Warrandyte State Park, who were holding an open day at their plant nursery. We used the day to gain useful tips for developing and running our own plant nursery.

The year began with the worst flooding we have seen in Billys Creek. The floods damaged the track in places, carried away many new trees and tree-guards and deposited an enormous amount of silt along the creek banks. We had two rescue sessions to stand up trees knocked down by the floods, often having to dig the guards out of 30cm depth of silt. Despite this set back many trees planted close to the creek are thriving.

A planned outing to locate features in the Park that need names, was well attended, but the purpose was changed, when Tom Lawless brought Stewart MacFarlane along. Stewart has lived in the area for most of his 87 years and Tom recorded his comments and stories at intervals through the walk. Wendy Nickson has since converted this tape onto paper and it will be a treasured record of some of the early history of the Park. It was with deep regret that we learned recently of Stewart MacFarlane's death and we tender our sympathy to his family and our appreciation of his sharing his love of the area with us that day.

In January a successful day was spent removing willows from the upper reaches of Billys Creek. Many portions of willow had been brought down by the floods and rooted in the fresh silt along the creek. The area covered had been cleared of willows some years back by the Friends and this is clearly an activity that will need repeating at intervals. The bigger task of removing the willows from the lower reaches of the creek still remains to be tackled.

Several members represented the Friends and assisted at the Yinnar South Country Fair as usual. The organising committee have once more made a generous donation to the Friends, and this year it will be put towards the development of the plant propagation nursery at the Park.

One special general meeting of some importance was held when two sets of proposed changes to the constitution were voted on, with one set being adopted and the second set being rejected. Members then adjourned to the park to retrieve tree guards (not as easy a job as before, with many 30 cm or more deep in the fresh silt).

Probably the most important item to report is the development of our own propagation centre at the Park. Anton Wray, prepared a design and costing for a propagation centre with a capacity of at least 2000 trees per year. This was then submitted to the Department with an application for a Project Grant and we were delighted to learn that we received a grant for \$2800, to cover all the material costs of the new centre. Our own contribution is to be in providing the labour for the construction. Anton is to be thanked for his efforts in preparing the design and grant application so successfully.

Work on the construction commenced in July and Paul Lambert has agreed to supervise the construction. He and Rob Howell have put in a lot of work already, with some assistance from others and the construction is progressing well and is right up to schedule. We plan to be ready to start sowing seed for the first time in September. Thanks to both Paul and Rob for their efforts.

The opening of the propagation centre will be a new challenge to the Friends. Our membership is fairly stable, but we may need to put in an effort to attract new members if we are to fit the extra work into our year's activities. Perhaps we can attract new members with an interest in horticulture to help us to make the new centre a success!

Developments in the management of the park have been disappointing this year. The management plan seems to have receded once again. It did seem at one point that the access bridge over Billys Creek would go ahead, but in the end the money was not forthcoming and we must wait and hope for better next year.

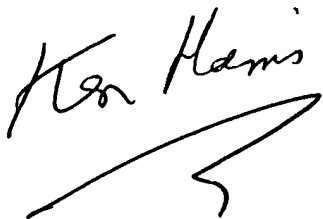
This year the second Friends Seminar took place in March. Rob de Souza Daw attended as our representative and reported in our news letter. Thank you Rob!

We were sorry to lose the assistance of Steve Shinnars and Shelley Templeman during the year. Steve and Shelley have moved to Jabiru in the Northern Territory. They have contributed greatly to the Friends while they were in Gippsland, with Steve serving as secretary for several years. We wish them both success and happiness in their new home. Our thanks to Yvonne Aplin and Wendy Steenbergen for taking over from Steve and Shelley on the Committee.

During the autumn a planned fuel reduction burn took place in the SW corner of the Stringybark Track. The burn was carried out while Rob was away from the Park, and although apparently successful, it flared up again and burnt nearly 3 times the planned area. It was very fortunate that the fire did not cross the track and head down into Foster's Gully. I am monitoring the burnt area to observe how well the flora regenerates after the fire and especially watching to see which orchid species appear in the burnt area. I have already noted millions of eucalyptus seedlings, presumably of both Yertchuk and Messmate. The only stand of banksia marginata in the Park, did not fare well in the burn and its progress is being watched with some concern.

In the course of the year the Park has received several important visits and some good publicity has resulted. The Churchill News published an excellent article on the Park by Dayna Cambell. Later in the year, Rob Howell and I conducted Ken Wilson of the Latrobe Valley Express through the Park and his write-up in the Express provided excellent extra publicity for the Park. I also conducted parties from the Australian Orchid Society, the Sale Field Naturalist Society and the Annual Field Naturalist Club Conference through the Park. The visit that most interested me was from Lindy Lumsden who spoke to the Field Naturalists about bats and then spent an evening trapping bats in the park. Three new species were added to the fauna of the Park and Lindy has agreed to return in December and give a further demonstration to the Friends and hopefully add further to our knowledge of the Park's bat fauna.

Finally, it is my pleasure once again to thank Rob Howell for his efforts as ranger of the Park. Rob has once more done an excellent job throughout the year and has always co-operated with and supported the Friends. We must particularly thank Rob this year for his efforts towards the construction of the propagation centre. This is all extra work falling on Rob as the direct result of the Friends activities and he has contributed a great deal of time to the success of the centre. We extend our warm thanks to Rob as usual.



Ken Harris, President
2nd August 1994